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JAN 29 1954

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FORMERLY "THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT"
OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE A.A.L.

New Year Message from the President	1
Notes on Documentary Reproduction	2
The Reference Library—Its Position To-day	7
Books for Students	9
Miscellany	12
Round the Divisions, 3	13
Council Notes	14

VOLUME 47 • • 1954 • • NUMBER 1
JANUARY

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THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 47, NO. 1

JANUARY, 1954

A NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I should like to thank you for the great honour that you have paid me in electing me, through your Council, as President of the Association for 1954. It is an honour of which I am deeply sensible, and one which I shall endeavour to justify by working to the best of my ability in the interests of the Association and on your behalf.

By their activities and achievements during the past year, your Officers and Council have given adequate proof—if such be needed—of their constant concern for your professional welfare, and their determination to press for all possible improvements. The strength and vitality of the Association are not, however, derived solely from the policies formulated in the council chamber; much more do they depend on the vigour and active enthusiasm of the membership at large. Especially is this true of the younger members, from whom the leaders of to-morrow will be chosen, and to them, and particularly to those whose interest is at present passive rather than active, I should like to say, "Make it one of your New Year resolutions to take a fuller part in your Divisional activities; not only to attend meetings, but to participate in the discussions; not only to make use of your voting powers, but to see that your own generation is represented on your committee; to support your Association, but not to be afraid to criticise, and to criticise constructively and openly so that your complaints and objections can be considered, and, if justified, remedied. Our Association has a proud tradition of nearly sixty years of service and progress; its future is in your hands."

Let me conclude by wishing each one of you a happy and successful year in both your professional and your private affairs; I look forward to having the pleasure of meeting as many of you as possible during my term of office.

LIVERPOOL.

J. S. PARSONAGE.

R. J. HOY.

NOTES ON DOCUMENTARY REPRODUCTION

There is no really elementary introduction to the subject of documentary reproduction suitable for candidates who have no technical knowledge or experience. Of articles about documentary reproduction there is no end, but most of them seem to be written either by technical specialists who assume too much knowledge on the part of their readers—and who have no idea of the extent to which much of what they write passes over the heads of examination candidates—or by librarians whose enthusiasm outruns the clarity of their explanations.

The occasion of the revision of a standard correspondence course provided an opportunity to reconsider the subject, and these notes are based upon the work done during that revision. I have had the full co-operation of Mr. F. J. Bosley, the chief technician of the Photographic Department of the University of London Library, and I should like to express my appreciation for his assistance, while making it clear that any errors of exposition must be laid at my door, and not at his.

In my view there are two main things which are wrong with the usual approach to the subject. One is the complexity of the mass of terms which confront the student, e.g., Contact, Reflex, Ruthurstat, Azoflex, and so on. These are used indiscriminately without its being clear that some are proprietary names of particular machines or methods, while others are general terms. The other is the lack of system in the nomenclature of the subject, no doubt due to the haphazard way in which it has developed.

In these notes I have used certain terms in ways which seem to me to be as logical as is now possible, and I hope that one result may be increased clarity on the part of readers. It remains to be said that these notes make no pretence to be a substitute for other reading; on the contrary, my main hope is that they will enable students to make better use of what they read by having in their mind's eye a picture of the subject so that it becomes possible to fit the things they read into their proper places in that picture.

The processes used for the mechanical reproduction of documents, whether early manuscript or modern printed book, may be classed into: (a) those which involve the use of a camera; and (b) those which do not involve the use of a camera. These I shall call 'camera' and 'non-camera' processes in these notes. I believe that these terms are preferable to 'photographic' and 'non-photographic' since the word 'photographic' may be held to include the use of photographic papers, and some of the non-camera processes make use of such papers.

a. Camera processes.

(i) **Photostat.** Properly speaking, this is a trade name, but it has come to be used in a general way as meaning a technical method, much as a housewife will speak of "Hoovering" a room when she means suction-cleaning, and in spite of the fact that her own machine may be a 'Goblin' or an 'Electrolux.'

When a camera takes a photograph in the ordinary way, it uses a transparent film or plate, and the resulting image is reversed not only from side to side, i.e., from left to right, but also in its colours, so that what was white appears black and vice versa. A second process has to take place whereby the image on the film or plate is reproduced on paper and then appears the right way round and in its correct colours.

In the case of a Photostat machine, photographic paper is used instead of the transparent film or plate, and a prism is inserted in the camera. This prism has the effect of re-reversing the rays of light received from the lens so that the image appears 'right way round,' but the colours remain reversed. Thus when the paper is developed a readable negative results, *i.e.*, the print appears the right way round, but is white on a black background. If black print on a white background is required, like the original, the process has to be repeated using the negative print in the place of the original document.

One type of Photostat equipment is a self-contained unit—this is the one which is usually illustrated in the textbooks. In this type the paper is automatically fed into and withdrawn from the camera, and developed ready for use. In this model each exposure has to be developed before another exposure can be made, so that the process tends to be relatively slow. An alternative type of this equipment is in two parts—the camera, and the rest of the equipment; the camera is fixed over an aperture in a wall and the rest is behind the wall in what is, to all intents and purposes, a dark room. Under this arrangement it is possible to concentrate upon the exposures first; the developing can be dealt with separately later. Thus this type has a higher rate of output than the self-contained unit, but it must remain a fixture, whereas the self-contained unit *can* be moved if necessary, heavy though it is.

Whatever type of equipment is used, the reproduction can be the same size as the original, or it can be larger or smaller within quite wide limits.

(ii) **Microfilm.** The film looks like ordinary cinematograph or magic lantern film, and is usually 35mm. wide, though other widths are occasionally used. The camera can copy originals of virtually any size on to the film which, when developed, produces a negative image; this image is too small to be read by the naked eye, and a special reading machine is necessary to enlarge the images. There are several styles and makes of microfilm readers, but they are all, in effect, miniature projectors which throw the enlarged images on to prepared surfaces so that the text can be easily read. The reading surface may be part of the machine itself, or it may be a wall or ceiling, etc., depending on the type of machine and the purpose for which it is intended. The reproduction may well be much larger than the original document; it all depends upon the particular machine.

It should be noted that whereas Photostat is, for all ordinary purposes, a fixture, *i.e.*, the material to be copied has to be taken to the machine; this is not necessarily true of the microfilm camera—the camera *can* be taken to the document.

The finished microfilms are stored either in rolls or in strips. It would be reasonable to suppose that long works would be copied on to rolls, and short works on to strips. The actual position appears to be complicated by 'nationalistic' preferences, for whereas the U.S.A. seem to prefer rolls of film, Germany has transferred quite lengthy works on to strips of standard length each bearing, say, 10 pages of text, with details of the work and page numbers clearly marked at the top. These differences serve to increase the difficulties of suitable storage.

Microfilm negatives may be used for the production of positive enlargements on paper with excellent results.

(iii) **Sheet microfilm or Microfiche.** In this the film is not a strip, as in (ii), but is a sheet shaped something like a catalogue card, upon which a number of pages of text are reproduced in rows. One such

microfiche in my possession measures 117 by 88 mm. (roughly 4½ in. by 3½ in.) and has on it 70 openings (*i.e.* two pages side by side when the book is lying open) arranged in 7 rows of 10 openings each. Catalogue details are at the top of the sheet.

Such sheets can be stored vertically just as catalogue cards are; they need reading machines designed on similar lines to microfilm readers in order to make the text legible.

(iv) **Microcard.** In this process the aim is to reproduce the actual text of a book or article on a card of standard size; the card is, in fact, a 5 in. by 3 in. catalogue card. At the top full catalogue details appear, and the rest of the space is occupied by the text itself. The text may, of course, occupy several cards, according to the length of the document being reproduced. Once specimen card distributed by the Microcard Foundation has room for 36 pp. of print in 3 rows of 12, beneath the catalogue entry at the top.

The procedure is for the original document to be microfilmed, and then the images, much reduced in scale, transferred to the cards—which have photographically sensitised surfaces—by normal photographic methods.

The cards can, of course, be stored vertically as catalogue cards, and they save the necessity of having the books themselves; in this they resemble microfiches. In order to read the text on the cards, special enlarging equipment is necessary, though of a different kind from the microfilm readers.

(v) **Microprint.** This apparently general term is coming to refer increasingly to the process patented by the Readex Microprint Corporation of Vermont, U.S.A. The product is a card, of about 6 in. by 9 in., which can carry 100 pages of print on each side in 10 rows of 10 pages each; identification details appear at the top, but not necessarily in catalogue entry form. As with (iv) a special reading machine is necessary.

As in the case of Microcard, the first process is the microfilming of the original text, but in this case the text is transferred to the card by offset-litho printing methods.

It will be seen that in the case of (iii), (iv), and (v) it is possible to do without the books themselves; the cards or fiches can be filed and then brought out whenever the text is required. Recent literature suggests, especially in the case of (iv), that there is no theoretical limit to the degree of reduction possible, and therefore, to the number of pages which can be reproduced on to a single card. No doubt a balance will have to be struck between what is technically possible and what is financially worth-while, for the greater the degree of reduction achieved, the more expensive is the reading equipment likely to be.

On the face of things there would seem to be no very good reason why there should be so many ways of doing the same thing. No doubt much experience will be necessary before we can safely say which processes are most suitable for which purposes, but it is to be hoped that eventually we shall be able to agree on a limited number of processes. As things are there seem to be nationalistic preferences in these matters, *e.g.*, the U.S.A. seem to prefer microcards and microprints, while Western Europe favours microfiches.

b. Non-camera processes.

These fall into two groups known as (i) Contact, and (ii) Reflex. The acceptance of the term 'Contact' here is particularly unfortunate, as both groups require efficient contact for success—both are, physically,

contact processes, and I should prefer to substitute the term 'Direct' for 'Contact' as indicating more clearly what takes place. Thus all non-camera processes are contact processes which may be classified as (i) Direct and (ii) Reflex.

All non-camera processes require three things—(a) an original which is to be reproduced, (b) a prepared paper on which the reproduction is to appear, and (c) light. The reproduction is achieved through the effect of light upon the prepared surface, and the only essential difference between Direct and Reflex methods is the position of (a) and (b) in relation to (c).

[It should be noted that for the sake of convenience I have written the following descriptions as if the light falls from above. In fact, light can be projected from any angle; the important point is always the arrangement of the sheets of paper in relation to the source of light. The method I have adopted saves the necessity of repeatedly saying 'above or below according to the position of the source of light.' Readers should have little difficulty in visualising the various possible positions.]

In Direct Contact methods the original is placed between the light and the reproducing surface; the original lies face upwards towards the light with its back in contact with the reproducing surface. This surface is itself lying facing the light also. Light passes through the unprinted (blank) parts of the original and falls upon the reproducing surface, causing a change in it. The printed portions of the original prevent the passage of light so that the reproducing surface lying under them is unaffected.

In Reflex methods the reproducing paper is placed between the light and the original document. Once again the original lies face upwards towards the light; the reproducing paper lies face downwards on top of it, i.e., with the prepared surface facing the original surface and in contact with it. Thus the back of the reproducing paper faces the light. Light shines through the back of the reproducing paper on to the original surface from which it is reflected by the blank, unprinted portions back on to the prepared surface, causing a change in it as in the case of the Direct methods. The printed portions of the original absorb light and do not reflect it.

Once these facts are understood, certain conclusions can be drawn, as follows:—

1. Since all Contact methods, whether Direct or Reflex, require contact between the original and the reproducing paper, the reproduction can only be the same size as the original; there is no possibility of enlargement or reduction.
2. Since Direct methods involve the passage of light through the original, this original must be translucent, or reasonably so, and it must be printed on one side only. Direct methods cannot deal with originals having print on both sides.
3. Direct methods produce copies which are readable without the need for further processes.
4. Reflex methods can cope with both single-sided and double-sided originals, and these must be as opaque as possible.
5. Reflex methods produce copies which are in reverse and which cannot be read without repeating the processes, using the copies as originals.

Direct methods fall into three categories.

(i) **Blueprint.** The prepared surface of the paper turns blue when exposed to light. Light passes through the blank (unprinted) portions of the original and on to the sensitised surface, turning it blue; the printed

portions of the original prevent the passage of light, so that the sensitised surface remains white at those places. The paper is washed in water to fix the colours. The result is a readable negative (*i.e.* the colours are reversed as compared with the original). This method is better suited to reproduce maps, plans, and line-drawings than print.

(ii) **Dye-line or Diazo.** In this process the paper has a prepared surface which is dyed, usually yellow, so that to begin with it appears yellow on one side and white on the other. The effect of light is to burn the dye away, leaving the surface white.

The source of light in this case is mercury-vapour lamps; the light passes through the blank parts of the original on to the dyed surface and burns off the dye at those places. The printed parts of the original prevent the passage of light and so leave the surface dyed. The paper is then passed through a developer which causes the unaffected (yellow) parts to turn dark. Thus the result is readable, and the colours are as in the original.

It may be noted that the Azoflex brand of Dye-line equipment (made by Ilford, Ltd.) can now be used for Reflex reproduction by the use of a specially designed transparent foil which has on one side a special screen. When the foil is placed on the surface to be reproduced, the screen is on the 'outside,' *i.e.* facing the light. Its effect is to prevent the scattering and loss of light upon reflection, which is inevitable with a transparency. The screen is subsequently removed from the foil, which is then developed; the foil is then used for the production of copies by Direct methods in the usual way.

(iii) **'Photographic' Direct Contact methods.** These require the use of paper coated with photographic emulsion, and no results are visible until the paper has been developed. The procedure to be followed is the same as for (i) and (ii) only in this case the sort of knowledge required by a photographer is brought into play, in judging the length of exposure necessary to achieve the desired result. After development the image is, of course, readable, but the colours are reversed. However, it is now possible to get 'auto-positive' or 'direct-positive' papers, the emulsion on which is such that when exposed to light it turns white after development. With the use of this sort of paper it is possible to obtain exact copies of an original, *i.e.*, black text on a white background.

Reflex methods.

Generally speaking these are the same as (iii) above. The difference is that the sensitised paper lies on top of the original instead of under it, as already explained above, so that the result is reversed and unreadable, involving a repetition of the process using the new negative in place of the original. The result of this second process is a readable positive with colours as in the original. It is obvious that Reflex methods are lengthier than Direct methods, and are therefore likely to be more expensive; their main value is in connexion with originals which have print on both sides or are too opaque for reproduction by Direct methods.

This essential similarity between the Direct and Reflex 'Photographic' methods may help to clear up some confusion over such terms as 'Copycat,' 'Ruthurstat,' 'Retocé,' and so on. These are trade names of pieces of equipment which are usually equally capable of both types of method, so that the choice of equipment will depend upon a variety of technical considerations (and, presumably, on the success of advertising methods).

It is my view that the decision about what process is to be used for the reproduction of a particular original is really a technical matter with

which the student should not be expected to be familiar. My own experience suggests that contact methods are often not suitable for bound volumes, especially those which are tightly bound. The pressure which is necessary to maintain complete contact between the original and the reproducing paper can cause damage to the spines of books. I have seen a book in which a substantial section of pages were forced out by as much as $\frac{1}{4}$ in. as a result of the use of a Contact method. In such cases it seems to me that the use of a camera is necessary to ensure freedom from damage.

One final word of warning is required. This whole subject is one in which developments are constantly being made, and I have deliberately avoided giving qualitative judgments wherever possible. It must not be assumed that all the processes dealt with are equally important or used to the same extent as each other, or that they will have the same relative importance in the near future. My concern has been only to set out the position as I know of it at present. Changes of emphasis, improvements in processes, replacement of one process by another, and so on, should be ascertained by constant reference to the literature. I have only recently been told of an example of the sort of thing I mean: I understand that the Azoflex transparent foil which I have mentioned is tending to give way to autopositive paper, since the latter is now much cheaper.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY —ITS POSITION TODAY

By G. L. HIGGENS, F.L.A., *Reference Librarian, Portsmouth P.L.*

ALTHOUGH the public reference library service has existed for many years, only a comparatively small cross-section of the population seems to be making use of this service. Why is this, and what steps can be taken to improve the position?

All too often a hesitant enquirer approaches the reference counter to ask if there is an information bureau in the vicinity, and is astonished to learn that the Reference Library is itself the place for which he is looking. The average person still seems to be quite unaware of the aims of the department, and of its resources and potential worth. It is probably true to say that the townsman, who is served by a reference library appropriate to the population of the area, is more "enlightened" than the countryman, but even so the majority of town dwellers continue to live in ignorance of this service which exists for their benefit.

The best way to attack this ignorance is through publicity. Members of the reference staff should be in contact with societies and organized groups of all kinds; brief informal talks should be given to school children, students, factory workers, the Townswomen's Guild, etc. Once an intelligent person has some conception of what the Reference Library is, and of what it contains, there is every reason to hope that he will take full advantage of the facilities offered. Two obvious media of publicity are the newspaper and the cinema. An advertisement inserted periodically in local newspapers might well contain details of the department's address, hours of opening, and telephone number, and a note to the effect that the resources include books, pamphlets, Ordnance Survey and other maps, lantern slides, a Local Collection and other special collections, periodicals, timetables, directories, a list of local societies, and so on, and that enquiries on all subjects are dealt with by 'phone, by letter, and person-

ally. Similar advertisements might well be screened in local cinemas, for it is surely true that when people are enjoying themselves, their minds are more receptive, and information flashed to them on the screen is information which is likely to be forceably impressed upon their memories. In this modern age people do not read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest information given on static posters; hoardings have become such an essential part of the landscape that they are seldom noticed.

It may be suggested that publicity savours of commercialism, and is therefore beneath the dignity of the profession. But surely this is a distorted view? Literally, the Reference Library has nothing to sell, but it has much to give. Librarians and Information Officers of all commercial and industrial undertakings should be aware of the range of the Library's Quick-Reference section of trades directories, telegraphic addresses, and year books, and of its relevant standard technical works. An annotated list of appropriate additions to stock should be published regularly in the local Chamber of Commerce Journal.

If the Reference Library is to fulfil its obligations satisfactorily, it must work efficiently both as an information bureau and as a research institution. The Reference Librarian should work in close co-operation with the Book Purchaser, and should check carefully all suggested additions to stock. He should also be personally responsible for checking the Daily List of Government Publications, and should order at once any item of immediate interest. Topical Stationery Office publications are sometimes reviewed briefly on the wireless during the morning news programme, and such reviews have a direct influence on public demand. It is vital that the latest editions of all directories, almanacs, year books, and other quick reference works should be available. Irreparable harm to the Department's reputation can result if incorrect or out-of-date information is supplied to commercial or industrial concerns; the yardstick by which the Reference Library's worth is measured is its reliability, and every member of the staff must strive constantly to see that that reliability is maintained. Briefly, there can be no half measures, no second best.

The material resources of a Reference Department may be excellent, but they will be largely wasted unless they are fully exploited by a staff which is "on its toes." This does not imply a comprehensive book knowledge. Someone once said that a Reference Librarian needs to be a paragon of all the virtues. He certainly needs to be able to sum up quickly the person with whom he is dealing; to be equipped with infinite tact; and to be able to wheedle from an enquirer the *exact* question that is to be answered. Many people seem to be incapable of stating their needs clearly and concisely, and are apt to resent questioning. The librarian in such cases will need to tread warily, and much delicate probing may be required before he gets to the root of the matter. When an enquirer obviously believes that he has asked a difficult question, whereas in fact the answer is immediately available, it is probably preferable and quite legitimate for a search to be simulated before the answer is finally produced. Naturally enough the enquirer does not wish to go away with the thought that he has been made to look ridiculous.

Unless the full answer to a query can be produced quickly, personal enquirers and enquirers by 'phone should be asked for their addresses and telephone numbers, and be told that their queries will be investigated as soon as possible. Where a difficult query is received by letter, an acknowledgement should be sent off at once, so that the person realizes that positive action is being taken on his behalf. The Department should

always be business-like in its affairs, but in its correspondence it should never resort to business jargon.

The network of Reference Libraries throughout the country is slowly but surely becoming established in the public mind; but when all sections of the community, from the business executive to the housewife, turn to it *instinctively* with their problems, the service will really have come into its own.

BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

COLLISON, R. L. *Indexes and Indexing*. (Benn, 10s. 6d.)

HOLMSTROM, J. E. *Facts, Files and Action (Part 2)*. (Chapman and Hall, 32s.).

One of the more promising developments in librarianship in recent years has been the increasing attention paid to bibliographical services—abstracting and indexing in particular.

Messrs. Collison and Holmstrom, who in their respective spheres of public and special librarianship have played some part in this development, have once more placed us in their debt by their latest books.

The scope of Mr. Collison's book is best indicated by the sub-title "A guide to the indexing of books, and collections of books, periodicals, music, gramophone records, films and other material, with a reference section and suggestions for further reading" and the 150 pages are "devoted to the task of explaining the basic rules on which all good indexing must rest and to showing how they may be applied in practice to the many different problems which confront the indexer." As a brief guide, this book will serve well. Part One deals with books; Part Two with other material, including films, periodicals, music and gramophone records; while Part Three is the Reference Section and gives proof correction marks (B.S. 1219 would have been useful; that for the Bibliographical References, 1629:1950, is given twice), twenty basic rules for indexers and an annotated list constituting "The Indexer's Reference Library." There can be no serious quarrel with this list save for the curious omission of the *Concise D.N.B.*, *The Oxford Atlas* and *The Readers' Encyclopaedia* and the preference for the *Oxford Book of Quotations* as against Stevenson. Finally, though it seems a little cruel to mention it for every reviewer will have pointed it out, all the index entries relating to Part Three are two pages out. In a book dealing with indexes and indexing . . . !

Mr. Holmstrom's book is in all senses a more solid work. *Filing, indexing and circulation* is Part Two of a work to be completed in three parts, the whole to be called *Facts, files and action in business affairs*. After discussing the fundamentals and the nature of classification, the author elaborates on various methods of mechanical selection and reproduction and the equipment required for filing. Some well-known indexes of the H. W. Wilson Co. are described, and examples of what the author calls "policy filing" are given from the experience of the I.C.I., the Foreign Office and the British Council. There are over 60 illustrations, unfortunately not all of them as clear as could be hoped, and a bibliography of several hundred items.

H.S.

COVENTRY CITY LIBRARIES. *Books for backward readers*. New ed., October, 1953. (1s. 6d.).

Backwardness in reading ability has increased in the post-war years. This fact is made quite clear in the Ministry of Education pamphlet

"Reading Ability" published in 1950, which said: "Approximately 30 per cent of 15-year-olds, 23 per cent of 11-year-olds and 16 per cent of adults fall in the backward or lower groups—instead of the expected pre-war 10 per cent."

The problem, therefore, is serious and admits of no easy solution. There are those who consider that teaching methods are at fault, and there are those who refuse to believe that the problem is any worse now than it ever was. Some teachers and librarians believe that books specially written and produced for backward children are needed in which the writing should suit the reading ability of the child and the contents, or interest, of the book should coincide with the child's real age. If such books were to be produced, however, there is a danger that they would be used by children of normal ability in the same way that American comics, originally produced for adults, have become widely read by children.

The Coventry book list is one attempt to solve the problem. The title, however, is misleading, because it is not a list of books specially written and produced for backward children at all, but a list of familiar titles of books published in the normal way for children of normal ability and development. These books have been arranged in groups according to "Reading Age," and an attempt has been made to state the 'Interest Age' of each book. The 'Introduction' explains that: the 'Reading Age' of these books has been determined by a formula, devised by a psychologist named Rudolph Flesch, which apparently depends upon the number of syllables and average sentence length of 100 word samples chosen at random from the text; that the 'entire stock of the junior libraries came under review'; and the interest age was 'based on practical experience in children's libraries.'

It seemed to me that the only sensible thing to do, therefore, was to determine whether the 'formula' and 'practical experience' mentioned was a success by asking children backward in reading to read some of the books listed. I accordingly telephoned a local head-teacher in charge of a Secondary Modern School in which 15 per cent of the children on the roll are backward in reading. He agreed to conduct an experiment and informed me that most of these backward children were retarded in their reading ability by four years. All I had to do was to select a small number of books from the Coventry list and he would ask some of these children to read them.

The first group of books in the list did not help me, since in the selection under the heading 'Reading Age, 8' no book appeared with an interest age of 12. Finally, R. L. Haig-Brown's *Saltwater Summer* and Rene Guillot's *Sama* were chosen from the group headed 'Reading Age 10' as the interest age of these books was stated to be '10-15' and '10-13' respectively. From the next group of books 'Reading Age, 11' the following were also chosen:—

	Interest Age
Armstrong, Richard, <i>Sabotage at the forge</i>	11—15
Brown, R. L. Haig, <i>Starbuck Valley winter</i>	11—15
Dawlish, Peter, <i>Aztec gold</i>	11—15
Mullins, Claud, <i>Are findings keepings?</i>	11—14
Ransome, Arthur, <i>We didn't mean to go to sea</i>	11—15

Within a week of sending these books to the school I received the following comments from the headmaster:—

SALTWATER SUMMER.

READER'S AGE—13. READING AGE 10—11.

This boy read only the first two pages and was put off by too much descrip-

tion, no action, and difficult words like 'easy alternation,' 'trilling,' 'automatically,' 'thoroughly seaworthy.'

SAMA.

READER'S AGE—14. READING AGE, 10.

This boy found the book much too difficult. He liked the illustrations and he studied these and read the script which told him something about the most exciting ones. There were too many difficult words. He pointed out 'engrossed,' 'annihilate,' 'vibrant,' 'gesticulating' and 'languid.' There are many more, and the proper names, being foreign, are difficult.

SABOTAGE AT THE FORGE.

READER'S AGE—14. READING AGE, 12.

This boy enjoyed some of this book. He is able to pick out the exciting parts and reads them. He confessed that he 'read' this book in an hour.

STARBUCK VALLEY WINTER.

READER'S AGE—14. READING AGE, 11.

This boy found the book fairly interesting, but did not finish it. He had retained something of what he had read, but had not always been able to grasp the complete meaning because of difficult words.

AZTEC GOLD.

READER'S AGE—14. READING AGE, 10—11.

This boy was put off by the word 'history' on third line. He then looked at the illustrations and read the script which told him about the more interesting ones.

WE DIDN'T MEAN TO GO TO SEA. READER'S AGE—14. READING AGE, 11—12.

This boy found the book quite interesting, but did not read all of it. He is a boy in whom an interest in reading has never been aroused, and obviously this was not the book to arouse it. He only reads the dialogue and 'skips' all descriptive prose.

All Reading Ages were arrived at by Standardised Tests.

The boys chosen are backward readers of the worst type. They are boys who regard reading as a school subject and, therefore, uninteresting. They would no more think of reading at home than they would think of doing Mathematics at home. What is wanted is something which will supplement school work and help to arouse in children of this type, and there are many of them, a love of reading. They have not discovered that reading can be even more satisfying than films, television or American comics. They should have books in which the characters are few but definite, in which there is plenty of dialogue and abundance of action and as little description as possible, and most of this can be 'got over' in the dialogue. Books of this kind might help them to develop an appetite for reading, but they will never read a lot.

I offer these comments to Mr. Simpson, as he asks for information on results in his 'Introduction,' but it would obviously be of considerable value if similar experiments were to be undertaken in other towns and the results made known. In the meantime, I am still far from happy about the real solution to this problem, since so many experienced teachers have expressed to me their lack of faith in modern teaching methods.

G.A.C.

BRADFORD, S. C. *Documentation*. 1953 reprint with introduction by Jesse H. Shera and Margaret E. Egan. (Crosby Lockwood, 12s. 6d.).

When 'W.H.P.' reviewed the original edition in the *Assistant* (1948, p. 75) he called it 'a collection of notes and studies reflecting Dr. Bradford's long experience as a bibliographer and his extensive practical knowledge of the U.D.C.' To this reprint the publishers have added a 35-page introduction, a bibliography by Miss Dittmas which first appeared in the *Journal of Documentation* in 1948, an index, a printing error on the contents page and 2s. 6d. to the price.

Dr. Shera and Miss Egan use a lot of space to prove that librarianship and documentation are a unity and that only in the last half-century have they tended to separate, largely because librarians have forsaken their earlier concern with providing subject access to books for the devel-

opment of the educational function of libraries. They instance the formation of the Special Libraries Association in the States in 1908 and the 'ignoring' of the new group by the A.L.A., and the Hoddesdon Conference in 1924 which conceived Aslib without any help from the L.A. In spite of this, an echo of Savage appears in their statement that in the past librarianship has paid too great a price for administrative competence and bought its subject specialists far too cheaply. The introduction finishes with three propositions suggesting a new curriculum for the common training of librarians and documentalists—propositions which should interest any joint L.A.—Aslib committee which may be set up for just this purpose.

L.I.A.

MISCELLANY

The Induction of the President.—It is hoped to hold a meeting in Liverpool during the second week in March, 1954, when the induction of the President, Mr. J. Parsonage, F.L.A., will take place. Further particulars will be given in the next number of the *Assistant*.

Title-page and index for the 1953 volume were distributed to subscribers with the December issue. Copies may be obtained free of charge by sending a stamped and addressed foolscap envelope to *The Hon. Publications Officer, Central Library, Newcastle upon Tyne*.

Summary of public library law. An amendment slip has now been printed, incorporating the points made in Mr. Murison's letter, published in our November issue. This slip will be included in each copy sold in future. Other members who wish to have a copy should send a stamped addressed envelope to the Hon. Publications Officer.

Sequels. Mr. F. M. Gardner, Borough Librarian of Luton, will be glad to hear from anyone who wishes to suggest alterations, additions or amendments for incorporation in the new edition, now in preparation.

The Public Libraries Committee. It has been pointed out that the statement on page 24, that 'any councillor . . . has the right to attend any committee' is not strictly correct, although many Councils do provide for this in their Standing Orders. An amendment slip to this effect has been prepared.

Copies may be obtained if required from the Hon. Publications Officer.

Select list of reference books and bibliographies. We are asked to point out that this publication of the North Western Polytechnic School of Librarianship is now out of print. It is not to be reprinted in view of the G.L.D. publications: *A union list of bibliographies* (in print, 5s.) and *A union list of reference books* (to be published in January, price 5s. 6d.). The two may be obtained together for 7s. 6d. All orders to the GLD Hon. Secretary, Tooting Branch Library, Mitcham Road, London, S.W.17.

L.A. Library. The trial period during which the library remained open until 9 p.m. on two evenings each week ended on December 16th. We understand that this experiment has been well supported, and late opening in the future will be discussed by the L.A. Council at its meeting in January. In the meantime, however, the library reverts to its normal hours, 9 a.m.—6 p.m. (9 a.m.—12 noon on Saturdays).

Fiction Reading. The suggestion made on page 127 of our September-October issue has not evoked the response we had hoped for, and no results will be published.

Divisional News. The present series of Divisional reports does not preclude the publication from time to time of interesting news-items which would formerly have been included in Active Divisions. These, together with copies of Divisional news-sheets, should be sent to the Hon. Editor as before. The

President would also like to receive copies of Divisional news-sheets issued during his year of office.

L.A. Subscriptions were due to be paid on 1st January, and prompt payment will be appreciated by everyone concerned. Remember that members whose subscriptions have not been paid by 30th June lose their right to vote in the current year's elections and to receive the *L.A. Record* and the *Assistant Librarian*. So please pay promptly, and do not forget to opt for membership of this Section.

A.A.L. Correspondence Courses. — Students are reminded that completed application forms, together with the appropriate fees, for the courses beginning in March and April, must reach Mrs. L. Martin, Carnegie Library, Herne Hill Road, London, S.E.24, on or before 28th February, 1954, after

which date no application will be considered. Earlier receipt is advisable and would be greatly appreciated.

Full particulars of the courses offered are given in the current *Students' Handbook*.

Revision Courses. A limited number of *Registration* and *Final* courses are available to run from March to June. These short period courses are reserved exclusively for those students who have already sat the examination in the subjects required.

Applications will be accepted up to one week after publication of the examination results, when this is later than 28th February.

Fees. The fee per course is £2 7s. 6d., plus 10s. extra to students in Africa, America, Asia and Australasia.

ROUND THE DIVISIONS—3

EAST MIDLAND

THE AREA of the East Midland Division, consisting of the Counties of Leicester, Lincoln, Northampton, Nottingham, Rutland and most of Derbyshire, stretches from the Pennines in the west to the Fens in the east, and south across the Vales of Trent and Belvoir to the scarp of Northampton Uplands. Nottingham is the central town of the region and the committee meetings are held there, usually in the Technical College.

The problems involved in travelling are always under consideration, and each year's programme is planned so that it is possible for all members to get to at least one meeting without incurring great expense. To enable as many as possible to attend the Annual General Meeting, it is held in rotation at or near Leicester, Derby and Nottingham.

The policy for meetings is as follows:—

- (1) There are always two sessions, one in the afternoon and one in the evening.
- (2) One session is devoted to a formal talk, usually on some aspect of

education for librarianship. The other session is less formal and may consist of a visit, a debate or a mock trial, etc.

- (3) At least one meeting per year is run entirely by junior assistants.

Apart from the five ordinary meetings held each year, a week-end conference is organised for the early summer, and each May and November a series of one-day schools is held. These are designed primarily for students for the Entrance examination and are held simultaneously at some of the main centres of population.

* Friendly relations are maintained with the North Midland Branch and the North Midland Group of the Reference and Special Libraries Section, and a fine spirit of co-operation exists. A joint EMDAAL/NMBLA meeting is held each year, being arranged alternately by each body. A joint Standing Committee on Education has been set up and has organised several part-time courses for library students. At some centres, where there have been insufficient numbers to justify two or more courses for different parts of the Regis-

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tration examination, a system has been evolved whereby the courses are given in rotation, a different part each year. The future courses are well publicised, thus enabling students to plan their studies in advance.

Perhaps the best example of co-operation is the *Newsletter*, which is issued three times a year and covers professional activities in the area. This is edited by the Division, duplicated by the Group and distributed by the Branch.

As far as funds will allow, there is an active publishing programme. In 1950 the *Students' Guide: a survey of the resources of the East Midland area for library examination students* was issued. At ninepence per copy it sold rapidly and is now out of print. In the near future it is hoped that a *Union list of Reference works* will be published. At the moment a sub-committee is busy editing this work from the replies to questionnaires.

An endeavour is made each year by

COUNCIL

The November meeting began with a recital of what must be an almost record list of apologies, although in the sensible tradition of this Association nearly all Divisional representatives had arranged for substitutes. The Council heard with pleasure that the Library Association Council had decided to open the Library in Chaucer House on two evenings a week for an experimental period of two months, and by the time these comments appear the success or otherwise of this experiment will have been proved, and no doubt appropriate action will follow. The Council also heard of the active negotiations the Library Association are conducting in connection with grading, welfare and working conditions: it was felt that here the two Associations were working very much in step. Concern was expressed by some delegates at the non-application, or under-application, of the provisions for post-entry training as laid down in the N.J.C.

judicious co-option to have a divisional committee which not only represents each part of the area, but also each type of library. This year the Chairman is a College Librarian and one of the officers a Special Librarian. Loughborough School of Librarianship is asked to send two representatives to each committee meeting, and arrangements have been made for students for Registration Group C to attend meetings a few at a time, as observers.

Some years ago the committee decided to fill a vacancy in the establishment for honorary officers and appoint an Honorary Press Officer. The person occupying this post is responsible for arranging that reporters from the local press are present at meetings and also for writing 'blurbs,' including this one. The committee instructed this officer that when writing this contribution to *Round the Divisions*, he was to mention no names. Their anonymity has been preserved.

NOTES

Conditions of Service, and the Library Association was asked to take steps to see that these useful and approved facilities were made more widely known. It would seem that here, as in everything else, there are backward authorities, and perhaps even un-co-operative chief librarians, and it was felt that the example and publicity together might have a beneficial effect in these unfortunate places.

For some years there has been an Inaugural Meeting, usually following the first Council meeting of the year, to which a distinguished speaker—and there have been some very distinguished speakers—was invited. Despite the excellence of these proceedings, indeed, your reporter knows of no specific adverse comment, the attendances have been declining alarmingly, and the Council decided on a new procedure. In 1954, the Liverpool and District Division will arrange a meeting in Liverpool at which the induction of the President

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will take place, and which will be regarded as a special occasion, not only in the President's own territory, but in the Association's own calendar.

Another important national event is, of course, the Week-end Conference, and it is hoped that all members will have "April 10th to 12th, Nottingham" marked in their diaries.

The third of the trio of national events presented greater difficulty. The Annual General Meeting has been held as part of and separate from the Week-end Conference—with varying degrees of success in each case. Stratford-on-Avon was recalled as an outstanding example of the separate meeting, and on the other hand, the equally successful progress down the river in the Presidential barge to Greenwich which followed the first Week-end Conference. In 1953 a separate Annual General Meeting was held on a Sunday, but British Railways threw out defences around Sheffield to the South and the attendance was much less than that which would, under normal circumstances, have been attracted not only by the Annual General Meeting, but by the chance to see the best-planned central library in the country and a unique branch library. So in 1954 the decision is to hold a mid-week Annual General Meeting in London, and both the national Council and the Greater London Division are aiming at a record occasion.

The other major item considered by the Council was the question of permission to attend full-time library schools. Permission does not only imply leave of absence from one's authority, but the ability to secure a grant. The Council heard with concern that in one area the provision of part-time facilities was being held as a bar to attendance at a full-time school: a further undesirable complication in a situation already beset by individual interpretations of educational responsibility, and by the complexities of "extra-district payments." This whole matter is receiving serious consideration at all levels, and it is sincerely hoped that the local govern-

ment structure will not be allowed to make a mockery of this part of the plan for a national system of education—because obviously what happens in librarianship will happen, to greater or lesser degrees, in other professions and trades.

The various Committees of the Council presented their recommendations for approval, and although none were referred back, several useful and informative discussions ensued. The Publications Committee recommended further reprinting of the *Fiction Index*, and heralded the publication of Mallaber's *Primer of Bibliography* early in 1954.

The Education Committee had discussed the Phillips-Pugsley correspondence, which is not unknown to readers of this journal, and have asked the Library Association Moderating Committee to consider the questions raised. It seemed that this was one of the occasions on which these most useful committees could be of further assistance. The Council also accepted a recommendation of the Education Committee which confirms the principle that written work is an essential part of correspondence courses, and have proposed steps to ensure that the submission of such work will be a necessary requirement from all correspondence students. Following consideration of the present position, which was obviously not satisfactory, the Finance and General Purposes Committee recommended a change in the provision of the *Assistant Librarian* to members attending full-time library schools.

The Honorary Treasurer reported that the Library Association were to pay to the A.A.L. the whole of the amount due for 1953 capitation, but bearing in mind the fact that the publications programme had been successful beyond their expectations, and in order to share in the sacrifice made by other sections and branches during this difficult year for the Library Association, the Council agreed that £100 should be returned to the parent Association.

W.T.

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